

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01

PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 DRC-01 /061 W

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P R 270943Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1090

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AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1502

USIAC

FOR: INA, ICS/E FROM NOVAK/KEITH

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: DAMASCUS FAIR OPENING

1. DAMASCUS FAIR OFFICIALLY OPENED EVENING JULY 25 WITH SPEECH BY MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND OPENING OF SYRIAN PAVILION. MOST PAVILIONS, INCLUDING OURS, OPENING DOORS JULY 26, WHICH NON-WORK DAY FOR SYRIAN POPULATION. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING OPENING SPEECH CROWD OF UPWARDS OF 1,000 FORMED AROUND AMERICAN PAVILION, PROMPTING US TO RUN TWO FILMS FROM AGENCY'S APOLLO SERIES ON OUTDOOR SCREEN.
2. FOR USIA OFFICERS WHO HAVE HAVE NOTED DIMINISHING RETURNS IN TERMS OF AUDIENCE ENTHUSIASM FOR EACH SUCCEEDING APOLLO FILMS, THE SYRIAN AUDIENCE REACTION WAS VIVID REMINDER OF THE IMMENSITY OF THE APOLLO PROGRAM ACHIVEMENTS. IT WAS ALSO VIVID REMINDER TO SYRIANS HOW MUCH HAS TRANSPIRED SINCE RELATIONS WITH U.S. WERE BROKEN.
3. ATTENDANCE REPORTS AND TARGET AUDIENCE PERCENTAGES

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FORTHCOMING. VIP VISITORS NORMALLY ATTEND PAVILION ON

COUNTRY'S NATIONAL DAY. FOR US THIS WILL BE AUGUST 12, WHICH ALSO DATE OF OPENING PERFORMANCE OF FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY BAND.

4. EXHIBIT WHICH HAS DEVELOPED DOVETAILS NICELY WITH USIA AND COMMERCE OBJECTIVES, AS WELL AS GUIDELINES SUGGESTED BY MINISTRY OF ECONOMY. USIA EXHIBIT COMPONENTS, SKYLAB AND TREASURES OF SPACE, WILL GIVE AN ESTIMATED ONE MILLION SYRIANS A GLIMPSE OF U.S. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS. THESE COMPONENTS SUPPORTED BY ENTIRE APOLLO FILM SERIES, PLUS FILMS DEPICTING OTHER ASPECTS OF AMERICAN CULTURE. AGENCY-PRODUCED PUBLICATIONS NOW ON HAND IN SUFFICIENT NUMBER, THANKS TO TIMELY SUPPORT FROM OTHER AREA POSTS AND RSC BEIRUT. AMONG 12 COMMERCIAL EXHIBITORS ARE SEVERAL WHOSE BOOTHS DEPICT CONTRIBUTIONS TO AEROSPACE RESEARCH, LENDING THEMATIC FLAVOR TO ENTIRE SHOW. IN GENERAL, EXHIBITORS DEMONSTRATING SYSTEMS AND PRODUCTS DIRECTLY APPLICABLE TO SYRIAN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, RATHER THAN CONSUMER GOODS. THIS IN LINE WITH SARG SUGGESTIONS.

5. WE BELIEVE THIS EXHIBIT UNUSUAL IN THAT IT IS JOINT USIA/COMMERCE VENTURE. THESE OBVIOUS BENEFITS THIS APPROACH FOR FAIRS OF DAMASCUS TYPE, AND WE BELIEVE LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNED FOR FUTURE SUCH PROJECTS. MORE ON THIS LATER.

KEITH

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